

AUSTRALIAN ProPhoto

The Magazine For Imaging Professionals

\$8.95 NZ\$10.99 | VOLUME 71 NUMBER 5, 2015 | www.avhub.com.au



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ON PHOTO
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Zeiss Loxia Lenses

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© 2015. ISSN 1328-715X
Online at www.avhub.com.au



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Making news in this issue are Canon's plans for a 120 MP D-SLR and an 8K video camera, Panasonic's Lumix GX8, Olympus's upgraded entry-level OM-D camera, a swag of lenses from Nikon, and much more. As usual, we also publish a calendar of the important imaging events happening locally and overseas over the coming months. For the latest news from the imaging industry visit www.avhub.com.au

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It's Australia's most important photography festival, attracting exhibitors from all over the world. This year, reports Alison Stieven-Taylor, a revised format made the major attractions much more accessible.

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Save hunting, save time and get *ProPhoto* delivered direct to your door — and in a lovely traditional ink-on-paper form too!

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Epson is currently in the process of updating its line-up of photo printers under the new 'SureColor' brand. Trevorn Dawes tries out the A3+ format SC-P600 and finds it a very capable machine for printing at moderate volumes.

43 Business Matters – How To Create An Online Photography Portfolio

Presenting images online is an increasingly important component of any photographer's marketing strategy. Rosemary Ann Ogilvie provides some advice about how to create an effective online portfolio.

46 On Trial – Zeiss Loxia Lenses

Sony's Alpha 7 Series mirrorless cameras are starting to make significant inroads into the professional sector so it's hardly surprising that the makers of high-end lenses such as Zeiss are starting to take notice. The Loxia 35mm f2.0 Biogon and 50mm f2.0 Planar are the perfect match for these high performing full-35mm sensors.



This issue's cover photograph is by Emmanuel Angelicas from his exhibition *Silent Agreements* Marrickville 45 shown at this year's Head On Photo Festival in Sydney. Alison Stieven-Taylor's analysis of this year's festival begins on page 18.





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The Magic Of The Moment

Recently I interviewed the singer – and current

judge of *The X Factor (Australia)* – Guy Sebastian, for a profile to appear in our sister magazine, *Camera*. Photography is Guy's creative refuge and he's almost as passionate about it as he is about his music. I interviewed him in his tiny private recording studio in inner-city Sydney which, interestingly, is packed with analog equipment because he particularly likes the audio characteristics and because he's a self-confessed "gear geek". More interesting though, were the parallels that Guy drew between photography and music.

Both, these days, are highly technical endeavours, but at the heart of both is emotion... and it's all too easy for the former to get in the way of the latter. As in a photograph, Guy notes, a song can end being overworked – too much technology used mainly for its own sake rather than providing any additional understanding of the subject matter. Sometimes a simple melody line or lyric is stronger – particularly in emotional terms – than any amount of post-production wizardry.

"Sometimes with songs I've gone back and back and back and back so much – because I can be so critical – that you lose the magic of just making a moment. A song is a moment in someone's life... it's a snippet of what I was going through or what I was feeling... and I've put it down in a certain way at that time, but sometimes you can analyse every nuance of a song and worry about what everybody is going to think, rather than accepting that, like every artist, I'm always growing and honing in on my art.

"And I do the same thing with my photography... it's tempting to over-edit an image because you think it will somehow make it better, but in the end it's about feeling something. A lot of what you might add is actually unnecessary."

Balancing the technical and the creative is always the challenge. You need to have some technical ability – even a lot – in order to be able to get where you want to go creatively... but, on the other hand, you don't want the technicalities getting in the way.

"It's exactly the same in music," says Guy Sebastian. "If you understand the tools and things that you are able to use, there are so many more options as far as what you can achieve, because what you hear you can actually execute... and it's the same with photography. But then they are just tools. I'm now trying to cut down on how much post-production I do because you can get so caught up in the process that you lose the real essence of the original image.

"It's easy to mess up something beautiful. It's a really, really fine line. There's the purist perspective of, 'no, don't mess with it, it's pretty good', and then there's the perspective of that, well, it could be more. And then there's the fact that you've overdone it... you've taken something beautiful and you've messed it up... your intentions were good, but..."

In photography we talk about looking without seeing... Guy contends that in music, you can listen without hearing.

"It's like wishing you'd written that song. As a songwriter, sometimes I'll collaborate with producers and they'll have beds of music that I flick through, say, ten tracks and only one of them will stand out, but the others I just can't hear a melody over. Then suddenly I'll hear one of them on the radio because somebody has written a smash to it and I'll think, 'Oh, now I can hear it', but by then it's too late. So it's about being receptive and about not coming in with a whole lot of preconceived ideas. So with my photography, especially landscapes, I'll plan ahead – because I have to with my schedule – but then there are the pictures that just happen... when something just moves me. That emotional element is really what makes a great song or a great photograph."

Amen to that.

Paul Burrows

Paul Burrows, Editor



BEHIND EVERY POWERFUL IMAGE IS A POWERFUL STORY

The Canon Light Awards is a programme of challenges created and judged by photographers. Be inspired, challenge yourself, improve your skills and become better storytellers through photography. Winners receive feedback from our Masters, plus there are over \$150,000 in prizes to be won. See the latest brief and submit your entry at www.canon.com.au/lightawards

Photo: Darren Jew, Canon Master

Canon

no one sees it like you

New Lumix GX Model Gets 20 MP And Dual IS

Panasonic continues to demonstrate it's in tune with what photographers want in a mirrorless camera. Following the SLR-style Lumix G7 launched a couple of months ago comes the Lumix GX8, the company's latest rangefinder-style model.

The GX8 replaces the highly popular GX7 and retains that model's novel tilting viewfinder arrangement, but has an all-new sensor, the advanced '4K Photo' modes introduced with the G7, an adjustable-angle monitor screen, faster continuous shooting speeds and an upgraded autofocus system.

The EVF tilts through 90 degrees and employs an OLED-type panel with a resolution of 2.36 million dots. The magnification is increased to 0.77x (35mm format equivalent) and the scene coverage is 100 percent. A larger eyecup addresses the issue of 'light leakage' which was problematic on the GX7. The 7.62 cm monitor screen is also an OLED panel and adjustable for both tilt and swing, with a resolution of 1.037 million dots. It also provides touch-screen controls.

The GX8's 'Live MOS' type sensor boasts the highest resolution yet seen in a Lumix G Series camera with 21.77 million pixels (20.3 MP effective). The ISO range is equivalent to 200 to 25,600 with a one-stop 'pull' to ISO 100. The new sensor is matched with the same 'Venus Engine' processor as is used in the flagship GH4 giving a maximum continuous shooting speed of 8.0 fps with the AF/AE locked to the first frame, 6.0 fps with continuous AF/AE adjustment. As is becoming standard on Panasonic Lumix G Series cameras, the GX8 can record Ultra HD 4K video at 3840x2160 pixels and 25fps, giving a bit rate of 100 Mbps. It can also

record Full HD video in either the MP4 or AVCHD formats. Other video features include the 'Cinelike' D and V profiles, a zebra pattern generator, focus-peaking display, stereo audio input and an uncompressed (8-bit, 4:2:2) video output at up to 4K from the HDMI terminal.

A first for the Lumix G range is sensor-based image stabilisation which can be combined with the optical correction provided in the system's lenses. With both body-based and lens IS working together, Panasonic claims stabilisation is 3.5x more effective at wide-angle focal lengths and 1.5x at telephoto focal lengths. The body-based stabiliser provides correction over four axis and, particularly useful, is available when using non-stabilised 'legacy' lenses.

As on the G7, there's a choice of '4K Photo' which leverage the 8.3 MP resolution of a still frame extracted from 4K video footage. The '4K Pre-Burst' mode captures 60 images in two seconds (i.e. at 30 fps); 30 prior to shutter release and 30 after, the idea being that you'll never miss that 'decisive moment'. In '4K Burst' mode, the camera shoots at 30 fps for as long as the shutter button is held down for up to 29 minutes and 59 seconds. The third option – called '4K Burst S/S' – does the same except that it works like a 'T' setting so one press of the shutter button starts the recording and a second press stops it (S/S is short for Start/Stop). These '4K Photo' modes can be used with any exposure control mode and, with the latter two, there's a choice of aspect ratios, namely 4:3, 3:2, 16:9 and 1:1.



Also inherited from the G7 is the 'DFD' (Depth From Defocus) contrast-detection autofocus system – which enables a response time of just 0.07 seconds – and employs a new control

algorithm which uses the target's size and motion vector as well as its colour. Also new is a 'Starlight AF' mode which employs much smaller measuring points – so it can work with pinpoints like stars – and increased low-light sensitivity down to -4.0 EV.

The provision of a sensor-based shutter allows for a top speed of 1/16,000 second (and continuous shooting at 10 fps) plus GX8 has a built-in WiFi module (with NFC connectivity), 22 'Creative Control' effects settings, an intervalometer for time-lapse photography, and a silent shooting mode. The magnesium alloy bodysell is now fully sealed against the intrusion of dust or moisture, features an updated control layout which now includes a dial for setting exposure compensation (up to +/-5.0 EV), front and rear input wheels and eight programmable 'Fn' buttons (plus five accessed via the monitor screen).

Available in either black or silver, the Lumix GX8 is priced at \$1399 for the camera body or \$1499 packaged with the G Vario 14-42mm f3.5-5.6 ASPH Mega OIS zoom. A second kit option provides the G X Vario 14-140mm f3.5-5.6 ASPH Power OIS superzoom (equivalent to 28-280mm) and is priced at \$1999. The third kit option has the G X Vario 12-35mm f2.8 ASPH Power OIS Pro zoom and is priced at \$2399.

For more information visit www.panasonic.com.au

Wacom's Bright Spark

Wacom's new Bamboo Spark is described as a "smart folio" and it allows you to capture and store handwritten notes or sketches for subsequent reference or further development. Once written on the notepad, with the push of a button, the Bamboo Spark synchronises this information to the Wacom Cloud for storage.

Wacom's Bamboo Spark combines a traditional ink pen with the company's core digital pen technology in a smart pen and smart folio. You write and sketch with Bamboo Spark's traditional ink pen on most A5 paper (i.e. 148x210 millimetre). The smart folio's EMR (Electro-Magnetic Resonance) board – which communicates with the Bamboo Spark pen –

enabling the traditional ink-on-paper writing or sketching to be converted instantly to digital content. Files can be saved in the WILL (Wacom Ink Layer Language), JPEG or PDF formats. Ink refills for the pen are available on the Wacom e-store, and allow for up to three months of use.

Using the Bamboo Spark app, every stroke is saved by simply pushing the button in the centre of the device, saving up to 100 pages even in offline mode. Notes can also be edited in the Bamboo Spark app or exported to

Bamboo Paper, Evernote or Dropbox. The free Wacom Cloud account provides access to content across devices. The Bamboo Spark is charged via a USB, giving approximately eight hours of continuous use.

The Bamboo Spark is available in three models – namely the Bamboo Spark with a gadget pocket, featuring a carrier for smartphone, pen, business cards and paper; the Bamboo Spark with tablet sleeve made with premium neoprene which provides room for a tablet and/or smartphone, pen and paper; and the Bamboo Spark with snap-fit for iPad Air 2, specifically designed for the iPad Air 2.

At the time of going to press, local pricing had yet to be announced.

For more information about the Bamboo Spark visit www.wacom.com



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www.zeiss.com/batis



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MAKE A DATE

Exhibitions – Events – Workshops – Seminars

Current to 5 October: Exhibition. *Wildlife Photographer Of The Year*. A total of 100 award-winning images from the world's largest wildlife and natural history photo competition. At the Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney, NSW 2010. Museum hours are 9.30am to 5.00pm daily. Entry fee is \$20 for adults, \$11 concessions and children. Visit www.australianmuseum.net.au for more information.

Current to 11 October: Exhibition. *The Photograph And Australia*. Comprising 350 photographs from over 35 lenders, this major exhibition reflects an evolving image of Australia from the 1840s onwards. At the Queensland Art Gallery, Stanley Place, Cultural Precinct, South Bank, Brisbane, Queensland 4101. Telephone (07) 3840 7303 for more information or visit www.qagoma.qld.gov.au Gallery hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm daily.

Current to 25 October: Exhibition. *Julia Margaret Cameron: From The Victoria & Albert Museum*. Marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of the famous British portrait photographer with prints on loan from London's V&A. At the Art Gallery of NSW, Art Gallery Road, The Domain, NSW 2000. Telephone (02) 9225 1744 or visit www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au for more

information. Gallery hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm daily (open to 9.00pm on Wednesdays).

16 – 18 October: The Digital Show 2015. All the latest imaging products and processes on show. Organised by the Image & Digital Entertainment Association (IDEA) Australia. At the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre, Southbank, Melbourne, Victoria 3006. For more information visit www.thedigitalshow.com.au

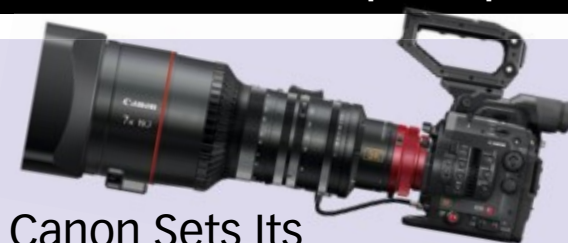
20 November – 13 March 2016: Exhibition. *Bailey's Stardust*. A retrospective exhibition of photographs from London's National Portrait Gallery covering the long career of legendary fashion photographer David Bailey. At the National Portrait Gallery (NPG), King Edward Terrace, Parkes, ACT 2600. Gallery hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm daily. For more information telephone (02) 6102 7000 or visit www.portrait.gov.au

20 – 25 September 2016: 2016 Photokina World Of Imaging. The world's largest exhibition of new imaging products and processes. At the Köln Messe, Cologne, Germany. Visit www.photokina-cologne.com for more information.

BRIEF EXPOSURES

Nikon recently celebrated the production of 95 million Nikkor lenses since the legendary Nikon F system was launch in 1959. This follows Canon's 110 million lenses production milestone. The two rivals used to be neck-and-neck in the lens production numbers race, but Canon seems to have pulled ahead over the last year or so. Of course, Nikon's count started earlier

too, although it's really from the autofocus era onwards that both manufacturers' numbers really started to accelerate. There have been quite a few new lens announcements from Nikon recently so the company no doubt has its eye on reaching the magic 100 million units milestone. For more information about Nikkor lenses please visit www.mynikonlife.com.au



Canon Sets Its Sights On More Pixels

If you're still getting your head around Canon's 50 megapixels D-SLRs, the message from the company is that you ain't seen nothin' yet.

Canon had released details of various development projects which will see it move the Cinema EOS system up to 8K video and its EOS D-SLR system up to 120 megapixels. What's more, also in the pipeline is an 'APS-H' format sensor (which is slightly larger than 'APS-C', giving a focal length magnification factor of 1.3x) with a staggering resolution of 250 megapixels. This CMOS-type sensor has an imaging area of 29.2x20.2 millimetres and delivers an output of 19,580x12,600 pixels.

Canon also claims an ultra-high signal readout speed of 1.25 billion pixels per second which had been made possible through circuit miniaturisation and enhanced signal-processing technology. As a result, the 250 MP sensor will be able to capture full-resolution images at a speed of 5.0 fps. Additionally, despite the colossal pixel count, Canon says it will also deliver excellent high sensitivity performance.

There's no indication of when a product using this sensor will go into production (it appears more likely to be used in industrial and scientific applications), but the wording of the press release regarding the 8K video camera and the 120 MP D-SLR seems to imply that neither of these products are very far away.

The 8K Cinema EOS System camera will be equipped with a Canon Super 35 mm-equivalent CMOS sensor that delivers a resolution of 8192x4320 pixels (i.e. approximately 35.39 million pixels effective) at 60 fps. It will have the EF mount and be compatible with 78 of Canon's existing models (60 EOS lenses and 18 EF Cinema lenses). Canon is claiming 13 stops of dynamic range. An 8K reference display – with a pixel density exceeding 300 per inch – is also planned. Details of the 120 MP D-SLR are sketchy, even sensor size – we're assuming it's full-35mm because it looks very much like one in the accompanying image – but we're told it will be a CMOS device. To quote from the press release; "The high-resolution images that the camera will be capable of producing will recreate the three-dimensional

texture, feel and presence of subjects, making them appear as if they are really before one's eyes". The 120 MP camera will be compatible with 60 of Canon's existing 96 EF system lenses.

For more information about Canon's current EOS D-SLRs and Cinema EOS video camcorders visit www.canon.com.au



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Nikon Boosts Lens Range With All-New Telezoom... And More

New D-SLR lens announcements are currently coming thick and fast from Nikon. The latest arrivals are all AF-S models (i.e. with built-in autofocusing drives) for the company's 'FX' format D-SLRs with full-35mm imaging sensors. The trio comprises the AF-S Nikkor 24-70mm f2.8E ED VR zoom, AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f5.6E ED

VR telephoto zoom and the AF-S Nikkor 24mm f1.8G ED fast wide-angle.

The new 24-70mm f2.8 is the first AF-S Nikkor lens to incorporate an aspherical extra-low dispersion (ASP/ED) glass element which corrects for both distortion and chromatic aberrations. The 20-element optical construction also includes three conventional aspherical and two ED glass types plus one High Refractive Index (HRI) element.

Compared to its predecessor, this lens also has Nikon's 'Vibration Reduction' (VR) image stabilisation – claimed to give up to four stops of correction for camera shake – an electromagnetic diaphragm control which gives more consistent exposure accuracy across burst sequences, and Nikon's 'Nano Crystal Coat' anti-reflection coatings. The SWM drive is claimed to be 1.5 times faster than before. Like the previous model, the barrel is sealed against the intrusion of dust and moisture, but the new lens also has fluorine coatings on the front and rear elements to help repel water and dirt. Nikon says the durability of the physical construction has been increased. The new 24-70mm f2.8 has a nine-bladed diaphragm and an 82 mm diameter screwthread filter fitting (up from 77 mm previously).

The 200-500mm f5.6E ED VR is an all-new model employing a 19-element optical construction which includes three ED glass types

to minimise chromatic aberrations. It incorporates the VR optical image stabilisation which is claimed to give up to 4.5 stops of correction for camera shake. As it weighs in at a reasonably manageable 2.3 kilograms, it's feasible to consider using this lens hand-held, although it incorporates a tripod mounting bracket (which is detachable). It also has electromagnetic aperture control, a nine-bladed diaphragm and a 95 mm diameter screwthread filter fitting.

The 24mm f1.8G ED joins Nikon's growing family of f1.8 prime lenses for the 'FX' format bodies which combine speed with affordability and comparatively compact dimensions, including 20mm, 35mm and 50mm models. The new 24mm weighs in at 355 grams and has a 12-element optical construction which includes two ED types and two aspherical types. This lens also has the 'Nano Crystal Coat' anti-reflection coating. The minimum focusing distance is 23 centimetres.

Again, there's no indication of local pricing so, as a guide here are the US (SRP) prices which are US\$2400 for the 24-70mm, US\$1400 for the 200-500mm and US\$750 for the 24mm f1.8. However, remember that the Australian dollar is fluctuating quite wildly against the US currency at present so be prepared for some variations when doing your own price checking.

■ For more information visit www.mynikonlife.com.au



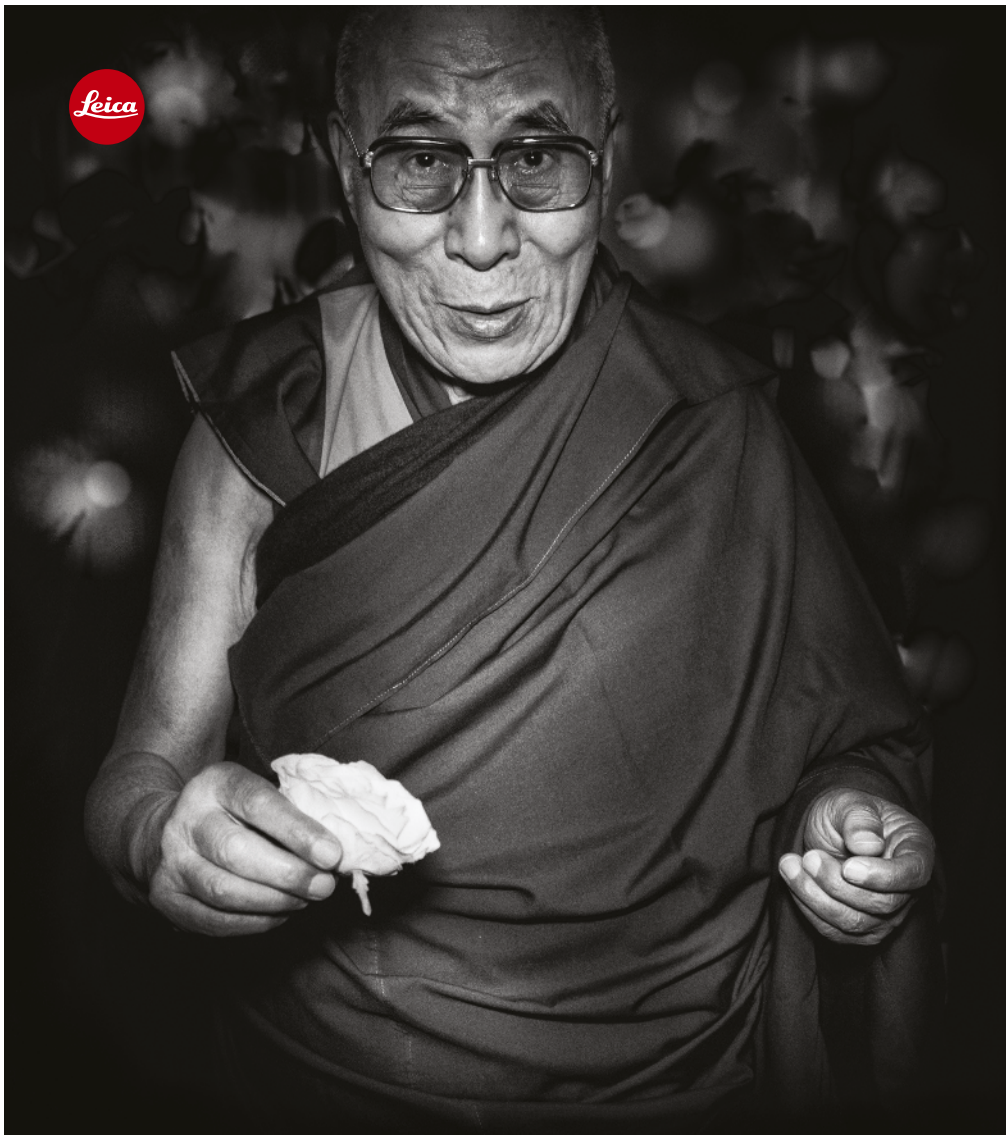
AF-S Nikkor 200-500mm f5.6E ED VR.

AF-S Nikkor 24-70mm f2.8E ED VR.

AF-S Nikkor 24mm f1.8G

BRIEF EXPOSURES

Adobe has introduced Camera Raw Version 9.1.1 which provides support for a number of recently released camera models including the Leica Q, Panasonic Lumix GX8, Sony A7R II, Pentax K-3 II (specifically for its pixel shift resolution mode) and Phase One's new IQ3 series of digital capture backs. Importantly, Adobe has stated this will be the last ACR update available for CS6 users so they'll either have to switch to the Cloud-based subscription software or use the DNG converter to handle the RAW files from any subsequent new camera models (but which doesn't include lenses). Visit www.adobe.com



MEET STUART ROBERTSON OF PEACE IN 10,000 HANDS AT THE LEICA CAMERA STAND DURING THE 2015 DIGITAL SHOW.

Peace in 10,000 hands is a global art project to challenge and reinvigorate the conversation for peace. Stuart will photograph the white rose, an ancient symbol of peace, in the hands of 10,000 people from every country and every walk of life around the world. The scale of the project has started to generate a global conversation illustrating that, despite mankind's differences, we share a universal desire to hold peace in our hands for the next generation.

"As an artist I am exploring our similarities through art and drawing on the phenomenal power of modern social networks and instant borderless communication that dissolves prejudice and makes mankind more connected than at any other time in history"

Come and meet Stuart Robertson along with Principal Leica Akademie Australia instructor Nick Rains, Mark Strachan, Woodrow Wilson, Kristian Dowling & more at The Digital Show, Friday 16 – Sunday 18 October 2015 at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre.

THE
DIGITAL
show
UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVITY

Stu Robertson - Peace in 10,000 Hands Artist

Contemporary artist & humanitarian Stuart Robertson melds photography, digital media, film, symbolism and neon to create works that speak profoundly to the viewer causing us to confront our own preconceptions and gracefully recognise our similarities in the human condition.



Robertson was the lead story on '60 Minutes' in late 2014, is a TEDx speaker, has published a book, directed a film and had many successful photographic exhibitions. In 2015 Robertson has spent time in Antarctica, The Syrian Boarder, Iraq and Russia.

Robertson is creating a global conversation with a ripple effect. He draws on the phenomenal power of modern social networks and instant borderless communication that dissolves prejudice and makes humankind more connected than at any other time in history. than at any other time in history.



Zenfolio – Not Just Another Hosting Site

With its extensive list of features, intuitive platform and strong customer support, Zenfolio has been voted the number one Website service. Now, celebrating its tenth anniversary in January – and under the new leadership of former eBay

executive, Arnaud Collin – Zenfolio is pledging to be more than just another hosting site. The company says it wants to be a professional photographer's greatest business partner.

In a recent email Collin sent to all Zenfolio users, he wrote a personal note to let photographers know Zenfolio is here to help them.

"I want to take your success even farther so you can truly rely on us to be your greatest business partner," he wrote.

In the following months, Zenfolio says it plans to focus on the following:

- Simplifying the platform so that anyone can use it with ease;
- Making it easier to grow traffic, clients and sales;
- Empowering photographers to reach their goals and find greater business success.

As part of these efforts, Zenfolio has streamlined its price lists so that photographers can choose from pre-populated lists with the most popular products, saving time that they would spend building their own. It has also improved the 'Favourites' feature so that it's now easier for photographers to keep track of their clients' selections.

Zenfolio also understands that signing up for an annual account is a big decision, so in addition to its 14-day free trial, Zenfolio now offers a monthly plan option. To try it free or for more information: www.zenfolio.com

Professional photographers are presented with an overwhelming choice of options – for example, Canon versus Nikon, D-SLR versus mirrorless camera and even film versus digital. There are also many Websites to choose from when it comes to hosting images. For the past decade, professional photographers all over the world have selected the award-winning Zenfolio as the platform for displaying and selling images online.

Canon

teds.com.au/pro



Canon EOS 1DX Pro DSLR Body

The ultimate camera for all professionals.

The EOS-1D X revolutionises the world of professional photography, combining the fastest shutter release and AF continuous shooting of 12 frames per second (fps); benchmark image quality of a new 18.1-megapixel, Full Frame CMOS sensor, an innovative new AF system and FULL HD video compliant with video industry standards.

18

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PALMUMXGX8CAMERA

Leica's CMOS-Equipped Medium Format D-SLR Arrives

Anounced back at Photokina 2014, Leica's third iteration of its S medium format D-SLR is finally available. Designated the Typ 007, the new model retains the same bodyshell as its predecessors, but as has been happening across the digital medium format world, it switches from a CCD sensor to a CMOS-type imager. The imaging area remains at 30x45 millimetres and the effective pixel count is 37.5 million, giving a pixel size of six microns. The sensor is paired with Leica's 'Maestro II' processor which enables continuous shooting at up to 3.5 fps and 4K DCI video recording at 24 fps. The buffer memory has a capacity of

2.0 GB which accommodates a burst of 15 RAW files (in the Adobe DNG format). JPEGs can be captured at one of three image sizes. The S also records Full HD video at 30, 25 or 24 fps (progressive scan) in the MOV format using MotionJPEG compression. It has built-in stereo microphones plus both a stereo audio

input and an output (both 3.5 mm connectors). Additionally, an uncompressed (8-bit, 4:2:2 colour) video feed is available at the camera's HDMI terminal for recording to an external device. The availability of a focus peaking display, timecode support and manual control for the audio levels makes the new S the most capable video camera in Leica's line-up... which is an interesting proposition. It also has built-in WiFi and a GPS receiver.

The new sensor's sensitivity range is equivalent to ISO 100 to 12,500 which is nearly one stop higher than was previously announced. Leica also claims a dynamic range of 15 stops. There are two memory card slots – one each for CompactFlash and SD formats – with support for the high-speed UDMA-7 and UHS-I types respectively.

The S has an all-metal bodyshell, comprising a magnesium alloy top cover and main chassis with an aluminium baseplate. The bodyshell is sealed against the intrusion of dust and moisture. The pentaprism viewfinder provides 98 percent scene coverage and the focusing screens are interchangeable. There's a fixed 7.62 cm LCD monitor screen with a resolution of 921,600 dots and a toughened scratch-resistant 'GorillaGlass' faceplate. The CMOS sensor also allows for live view monitoring (at 60 fps) as an alternative to the optical viewfinder.

The main camera systems comprise a single-point AF system using a cross-type array, a five-zone metering system (with the option of centre-weighted and spot measurements) and a shutter speed range of 60-1/4000 second with flash sync up to 1/125 second. However, the S Mount lens range includes six leaf-shutter models which enable flash sync up to 1/1000 second. There are currently ten S Mount lenses which include a 30-90mm zoom (equivalent to 24-72mm) and a 120mm tilt-shift model.

The Leica S (Typ 007) is priced at \$26,500 body only and is distributed by Leica Camera Australia Pty Ltd, telephone (03) 9248 4444.

For more information visit
<http://en.leica-camera.com/home/>

Olympus Packs More Value Into Entry-Level OM-D

Already one of the best value mirrorless cameras on the market, Olympus's entry-level OM-D model has been updated to make it an even more attractive proposition.

The new OM-D E-M10 Mark II steps up to the advanced five-axis sensor-based image stabilisation system employed on the current higher-end models, and which provides up to four stops of correction for camera shake. It also gets a new OLED-type electronic viewfinder with a resolution of 2.36 million dots, 0.62x magnification (35mm equivalent) and 100 percent scene coverage. A new feature is a "Simulated Optical Viewfinder" (S-OVF) setting which is designed to replicate the "visual experience" of the traditional SLR viewfinder. It employs HDR processing to enhance the dynamic range and give a 'look' closer to that of an optical finder. Olympus says S-OVF also improves viewing visibility in backlit photography and, curiously, "re-introduces the element of creative unpredictability inherent to SLRs".

The new camera retains a tilt-adjustable monitor screen with a resolution of 1.037 million dots and touch controls. New is an 'AF Targeting Pad' function which allows for the touch selection of the AF point via the monitor screen while using the EVF for framing and composition. The E-M10 II's maximum continuous shooting speed is slightly increased to 8.5 fps and the conventional focal-plane shutter is now supplemented by a sensor-based shutter which has a top speed of 1/16,000 second.

The maximum shooting speed with continuous AF/AE adjustment is 4.0 fps. The buffer memory is increased, allowing for a burst of 36 maximum-quality JPEGs or 22 RAW files (up from 19 and 15 respectively).

Full HD video can now be recorded at 50 fps with progressive scan as well as 25 and 24 fps. The suite of 'OM-D Movie' functions (introduced on the E-M5 II) are available and include advanced image



stabilisation, enabling smoother footage even when shooting with the camera hand-held. There's also now the option of using either ALL-I or IPB compression regimes, the former giving a maximum bit rate of 77 Mbps. A new video feature – in fact, new to the OM-D system – is 4K video time lapse recording mode which allows for up to 999 frames to be captured at preset intervals and converted into a 4K movie in-camera.

The styling has been slightly revised, but there have been some major changes to the control layout with the main mode dial moved so it's adjacent to the front and rear input wheels which have also been repositioned – similar to the E-M5 II's design – for improved operability. The space vacated by the main mode dial is now occupied by a classic OM-style power switch.

Unchanged are the 17.2 megapixels (total) Live MOS sensor and 'TruePic VII' processor, 81-point 'FAST' contrast-detection autofocus, 324-point multi-zone metering, GN 6.2 power (at ISO 200) pop-up flash, built-in WiFi transceiver and SD memory card slot.

The new OM-D E-M10 Mark II is priced at \$799 body only and \$999 with the M.Zuiko Digital 14-42mm f3.5-6.3 EZ ED MSC zoom lens.

For more information visit
www.olympus.com.au



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Canon Debuts World-First Lens Tech

Canon's new EF 35mm f1.4L II USM L Series fast wide-angle lens is the first to incorporate the company's newly-developed 'Blue Spectrum Refractive' optics.

Also a world first, the 'BR Optics' technology employs a special organic optical material which has been engineered at a molecular level to significantly reduce chromatic aberrations via its ability to refract blue light. Ordinarily, it's difficult to converge these shorter wavelengths to a single plane which subsequently results in longitudinal chromatic aberration (evidenced as colour fringing along high-contrast edges).

The BR Optics technology is incorporated into a compound element as part of new 35mm's 14-element optical construction which also includes two aspherical types to correct for distortion and one made from 'Super UD' (ultra-low dispersion) optical glass which also helps counter chromatic aberrations. The Mark II version of Canon's

popular 35mm f1.4 wide-angle features a weather-sealed barrel design and is claimed to be more durable than its predecessor. A fluorine coating is applied to the exposed front and rear lens surfaces to repel moisture and dust. The new lens also has Canon's proprietary 'Sub-Wavelength Structure Coating' (SWC) which is applied to the rear surface of the first and second aspherical lens elements to help reduce flare and ghosting. Other notable features include a nine-bladed diaphragm to create smooth out-of-focus effects and a minimum focusing distance of just 28 centimetres.

Autofocusing is via a rear-focus optical system using Canon's original ring-type USM ultrasonic focus drive. A full-time manual override is available. The new 35mm f1.4 accepts 72-millimetre diameter screwthread filters. It weighs in at 760 grams and is 106 millimetres in length.

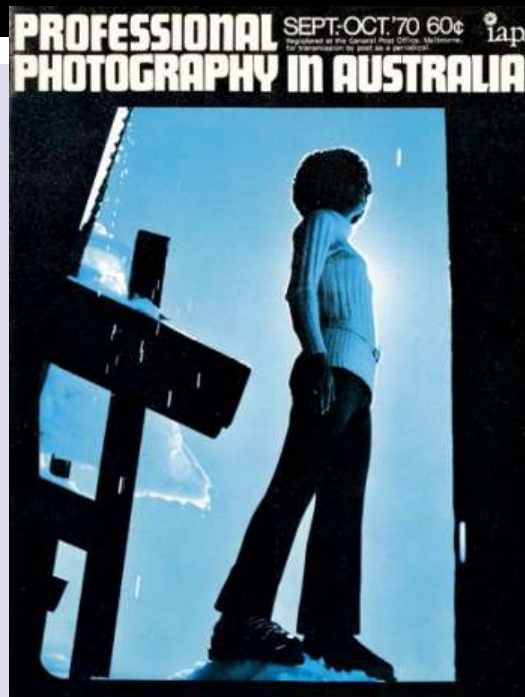
Local availability will be from October. For more information visit www.canon.com.au

PROPHOTO ON THE WEB

Today a Web presence is an integral part of magazine and newspaper publishing so you'll find *ProPhoto* – or, at least, some of it – at www.avhub.com.au. Here you can also visit the other titles in the stable of Next Media AudioVisual Group magazines, including sister publication *Camera*. Have a look at these because you might find another magazine that you'd like to buy from your newsagent or subscribe to. If you're interested in hi-fi, video, home

theatre, 'smart home' technologies or car audio, check out *Sound+Image*, *Australian Hi-Fi* or *Australian InCar Entertainment* (just follow the links from the AVHub home page).

The Website carries the latest news plus selected articles from both the current and past issues of *ProPhoto*, including a selection of test reports. Of course, there's a lot more in each printed issue, but you can stay in touch with us via www.avhub.com.au



ProPhoto 45 Years Ago

There's nothing like a dip into the archives to reveal just how much things have changed in the imaging industry, especially over the last couple of decades. In the early 1970s, pros were getting to grips with the idea of shooting with colour film and automatic camera functions. Here's a selection of what was on the pages of this magazine 45 years ago when it was called *Professional Photography in Australia*. This is a snapshot of the September/October 1970 issue.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Jenny Grinlington, RMIT, Melbourne.

TEST REPORTS: /// Polaroid MP3 copy camera /// Cambo 4x5-inch monorail cameras

PEOPLE AND PLACES: /// David McCarthy (Queensland) mini portfolio /// Paul Cox Garden Of Delights exhibition /// Ilford 'Age Of Aquarius' photography competition.

THE ISSUES: /// Promoting photography graduates to potential employers /// The acceptance of photography as a profession

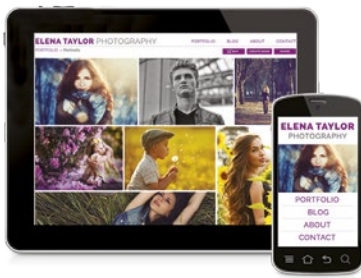
THE ADVERTISERS: /// R. Gunz (Photographic) – Gossen Lunasix exposure meters /// Agfa-Gevaert – Agfa Rapidoprint system /// Kayell Photographics – Elinchrom Quanta studio flash power packs /// Photimport – Sekonix exposure meters /// Photimport – Minolta SR-T101 35mm SLR /// Photimport – Bolex 160 Macrozoom movie camera /// Photimport – Pathe Webbo Double Super 8 and 16mm movie cameras /// Photimport – Paximat 5000 and 3000 autofocus 35mm slide projectors /// Photoimport – Hasselblad 500 Series 6x6cm SLR system /// Swift & Bleakley – Sinar large format cameras /// Maxwell Photo Optics – Nikon F 35mm SLR /// Hanimex – Durst DA900 and A600 autofocus enlargers /// Kodak – Kodak Rapid Colour Processor, Model 30 /// Watson Victor – Rolleiflex 3.5f 6x6cm TLR /// C.R. Kennedy Sales – Pentax Spotmatic 35mm SLR /// C.R. Kennedy Sales – Kowa Six 6x6cm SLR /// C.R. Kennedy Sales – Pentax 6x7 6x7cm SLR /// Polaroid – New and improved neg/pos 4x5-inch instant films /// Group Color Portraits (NSW) – professional processing services /// Goodman Brothers – Bowens Texturelite ring flash /// R.H. Wagner & Sons – Rodenstock enlarging lenses /// Ilford – 1970 Australian National Amateur Film Competition.

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Photography Every Which

Head On Festival 2015 Review



The sixth running of the highly successful Head On festival in Sydney featured a new format which, says Alison Stieven-Taylor, gave the event a more cohesive feeling. Here she selects her personal highlights from this year's international and local exhibitors.

Way

It is always a challenge to bring something new to a format that is established, but this year the sixth Head On Photo Festival managed to add flavour to an already successful recipe with the introduction of the Festival Hub located in the majestic Sydney Town Hall in the heart of the city's CBD.

Geographically speaking, Head On has always felt too spread out and the Hub solved that issue immediately. Here nine major exhibitions were on show, spanning documentary, fine-art and photojournalism. The Hub was also the venue for workshops, screenings and talks, many of which were held during the day as a way of engaging the city's workers.

Festival Director Moshe Rosenzweig programmed The Hub to deliver "...a taste of the breadth of the festival. We are appealing to a very wide and diverse audience – photography professionals, those who are keen amateurs and those who are not immersed in the genre, who aren't usually exposed to exhibitions. We are trying to inspire people to get involved with photography and having a central location like the Hub helps us do that".

The Hub also hosted the opening night event where hundreds gathered to discover the winners of this year's Head On Awards – the coveted Head On Portrait prize along with four other categories. Sydney's Lord Mayor, Clover Moore, officially opened the festival, and it was great to see the City of Sydney get behind the event. This year Head On comprised 50 featured exhibitions plus an associated program, and the diversity of work on show was remarkable.

One of the greatest benefits of the Hub was that it became the place where photographers could connect with each other which is one of the most important and valued functions of a photography festival.

"We realised there was no focus point for photographers like there was in the good old days when you'd go to the lab to drop your film and get to catch up with your colleagues there," explains Moshe. "As photographers, we don't have that opportunity anymore. That is one of the great things about the festival that people can get together, but it was not enough to meet up at an opening of an exhibition, or single events. That's where the idea of the Hub comes in."

International Artists

Away from Sydney's CBD, there were featured exhibitions in the inner city, including Chicago photographer Sandro Miller's brilliant *Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich: Homage to Photographic Masters*. Another imported show that took my eye was *Los Angeles Times* photographer Michael Robinson Chavez' *The Driest Seasons: California's Dust Bowl*. I found German photographer Daniel Schumann's *Palliative Care* series profoundly moving, and Chinese photographer Shunzan Fan's *Between Heaven and Earth* delightfully idiosyncratic.

Sandro Miller

Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich

Over the past 40 years, Chicago photographer Sandro Miller has carved a stellar career. His credits include being Michael Jordan's personal photographer; shooting for international brands like Coca Cola, Reebok, Nike, Samsung, BMW, Pepsi and American Express and; being regularly named in the Top 100 Advertising Photographers in the world. He's also



FEATURE

HEAD ON FESTIVAL 2015 REVIEW

an award-winning director with two short films to his name, both starring his good friend, John Malkovich. And to top it off, he's a ridiculously nice guy.

Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich: Homage to Photographic Masters, celebrates the work of photographers including Irving Penn, Dorothea Lange, Robert Mapplethorpe, Annie Leibovitz and Richard Avedon with John Malkovich appearing as Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon, Che Guevara, Mick Jagger, Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol and other celebrated cultural identities.

In creating this series, Sandro spent 18 months painstakingly researching each image and learning the different styles of lighting for each era. He says one of the biggest misconceptions is that he just photographed

Photograph by Emmanuel Angelicas from his exhibition *Silent Agreements* Marrickville 45 shown at the 2015 Head On Photo Festival. ■

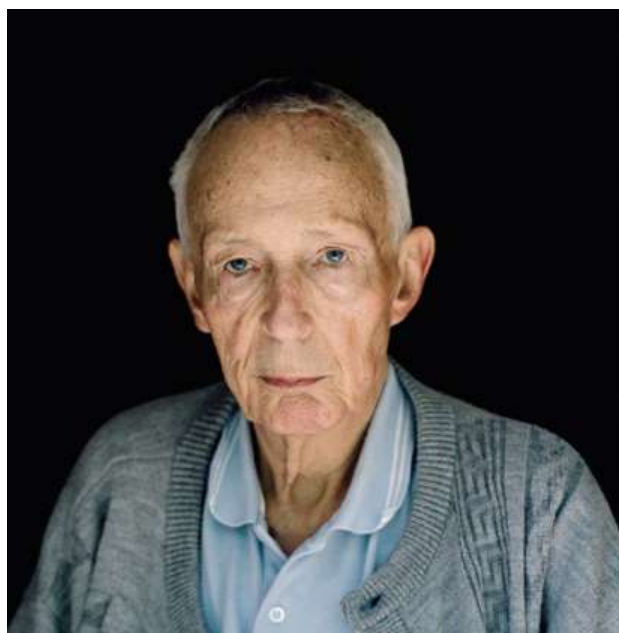
Photograph by Matthew Smith from his exhibition *A Parallel Universe*. ■





“ Festivals like Head On expose Australian audiences to an incredible array of photography and the hope is that the more they see, the more they will understand the value of photography as an art form.

Photograph by
Daniel Schumann
from his exhibition
Palliative Care.



Malkovich's face and dropped it into the existing photograph.

"People think it's all done with the computer. I'm old school, I've been doing this for 40 years. I use a computer like a darkroom. For the most part it's all in-camera and we're very, very, very proud that's how we did it."

Sandro knows Malkovich playing Marilyn Monroe will draw laughs. "But I also want you to take a look at the photograph and go, oh my God, he nailed it." And he did.

Michael Robinson Chavez *The Driest Seasons:* *California's Dust Bowl*

For the past four years, California has been in the grip of a fierce drought and many communities in the Central Valley – the state's food bowl – are on the brink. It is a story that is all too familiar in Australia and these striking black and white photographs resonate strongly.

Photojournalist Michael Robinson Chavez is on staff at the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper. This story began as an assignment and evolved into a series for which journalist Diana Marcum won a Pulitzer Prize this year, and Michael the Robert F. Kennedy Award for Journalism.

Rather than chasing the political or environmental stories, Michael says, "We really wanted to focus on the migrant workers, the farm owners and the communities without water to show the effects of the drought and its direct impact".

Michael adds he saw the series in black and white because of its historical import.

"This is a huge story and it harkens back to the days of the Farm Security Administration when Dorothea Lange, Steinbeck and all these people were sent across the west United States to document the dust bowl of the thirties. It was really important to me to keep it in that historical documentary vein."

Daniel Schumann *Palliative Care*

This body of work is incredibly moving, and touches on a subject seldom spoken about; death. We all know that death is the final outcome, but it's not a topic of general conversation. Modern medicine wants us to live longer and often the result is to die hooked up to machines in a hospital.

German photographer Daniel Schumann's *Palliative Care* series was shot over a 12-month period in a hospice. He chose to follow a certain number of people during the year and his portraits show the obvious – the physical demise – but they convey much more. They let us see the individual. Daniel comments, "My work seeks to make death visible, with all the pain and suffering that fatal illnesses entail, but also with the certainty that a final farewell in dignity is possible. I want to show death as something common and tangibly ubiquitous in the real world".

Shunzan Fan *Between Heaven and Earth*

If you had a dream life what would it be? This is the premise behind these elaborately constructed photographs where reality and fantasy collide. In these staged and highly manipulated images, Chinese photographer Shunzan Fan combines symbols from the real world with those of the ideal – a young impoverished girl imagines she is a princess; a schoolboy sees himself as Superman; a farming couple dream of living in a palace; a bicycle repairman wishes to be a pilot. Each image begins with a portrait shot against a hand painted backdrop and then is built in Photoshop. While it appears the people pictured are sharing their personal stories, they are in fact actors, but that doesn't take away from the beauty of the images or the cultural contrasts depicted.

The Australians

There were also some great local artists on show. The stand-outs for me were Matthew Smith's *A Parallel Universe*, Emmanuel Angelicas' *Silent Agreements Marrickville 45* and Patrick Boland's *My Inner Monologue is Analogue*.

Originally from the UK, Matthew Smith moved to Australia to indulge his love of



One of the greatest benefits of the Hub was that it became the place where photographers could connect with each other which is one of the most important and valued functions of a photography festival.

Photograph by Michael Boland from his exhibition *My Inner*

■ *Monologue is Analogue*.

over and underwater photography. He's often up before dawn and on the water ready to shoot as the sun rises. With a background in mechanical design, Matthew has created his own lighting system allowing him to use flash underwater to bring out the stunning electric colours of the Blue Bottles and other marine creatures.

In these images Matthew actually shares his perspective as he submerges into the water, capturing a world suspended between.

"The most wondrous part of any dive is the moment that the water engulfs my mask as my head slips below the surface. It's the suspense of the unknown of what lies beneath, the transitional part of moving from one element to the next that feels so magical."

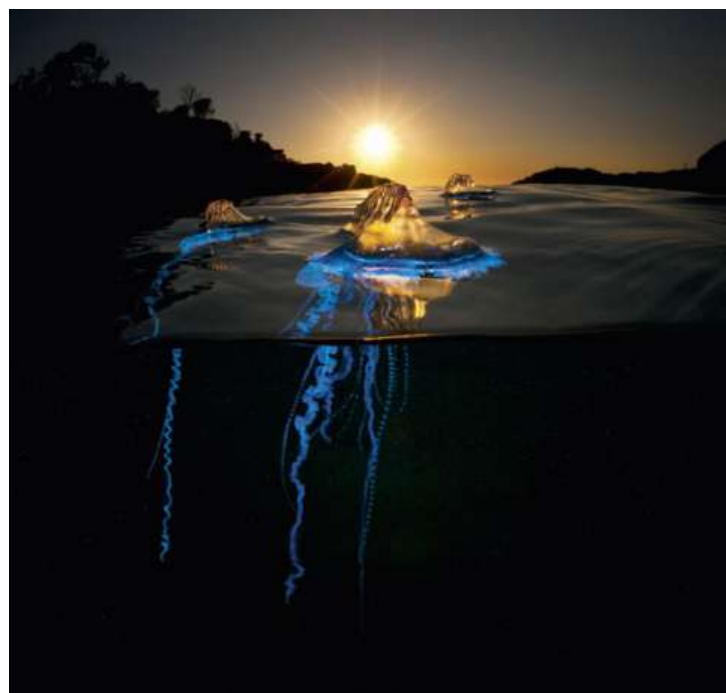
From the time he was given a plastic Diana camera at the age of seven years, Emmanuel Angelicas has taken photographs. That was in 1970. Since then he's used his home suburb of Marrickville – in Sydney's inner-west – as his canvas. For 45 years he's documented his family, neighbours and strangers – capturing images of Marrickville, its humanity and its dark secrets without censorship.



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■ Photograph by Matthew Smith from his exhibition A Parallel Universe.

■ Photography by Shunzan Fan from his exhibition Between Heaven and Earth.



"Marrickville is my home. I love it here," says Emmanuel. "Every time I go out with my camera in Marrickville, I return with compelling outcomes. It is a real place with real people. Photography has this power to render things sometimes so real that they seem unreal."

Patrick Boland ingeniously uses 120 medium format rollfilm negatives, which he holds in front of his iPhone camera to create unique blended analogue/digital images.

"When I look at film, particularly negatives, in this digital age, I see sadness, romance and history all rolled into one," he says. "My 'positive negatives' allow impossible objects to exist together in one place from two times. The images look simultaneously to the future and the past."

Making A Contribution

Festivals like Head On expose Australian audiences to an incredible array of photography and the hope is that the more they see, the more they will understand the value of photography as an art form. We still lag behind when it comes to seriously collecting photography. Head On also provides local artists with the chance to exhibit their work, to learn from other photographers, and to network. The Australian photographic landscape would be a desolate place without Head On's edifying contribution. **QP**

Alison Stieven-Taylor is a photographer and writer based in Melbourne. You can read her weekly blog on www.photojournalismnow.blogspot.com and see her own work at www.realityillusion.com

Olympus OM-D At Work

LACHLAN MOORE – ROKEBY STUDIOS, MELBOURNE

A recent convert to the Olympus OM-D mirrorless camera system, Lachlan describes it as “a revelation!” and he now has three bodies and a selection of lenses which he uses for both still photography and video work.

After working for eight years as a graphic designer during which time he frequently found himself in photographic studios art directing, Lachlan Moore decided he really wanted to be behind the camera so he “jumped ship” and began studying photography as well as working as an assistant.

Today he runs Rokeby Studios in the Melbourne suburb of Collingwood and works in a variety of areas including advertising, architecture, people and film stills. He

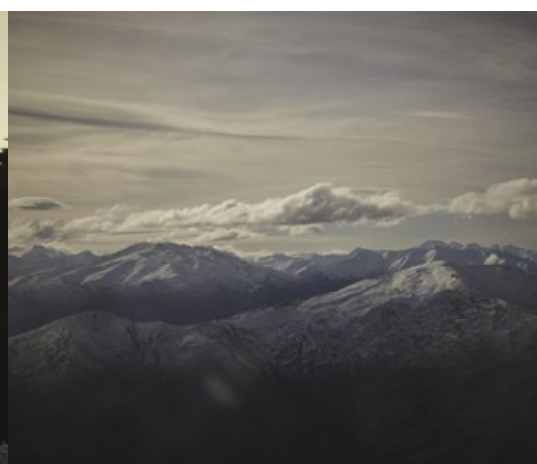
describes his photographic style as “honest and cinematic”. His great love is the ocean which fuels his daily @onemoore_insta feed, inspired by coastal living, open space, big skies and spectacular light. Previously all this photography was done above the water line, but now he has underwater housings for his new Olympus OM-D E-M1 and E-M5 Mark II cameras, Lachlan is venturing under the waves.

“Seascapes and landscapes have always fascinated me,” he explains. “The way light can change a landscape is beautiful and transformational. I grew up in country Victoria, between the ocean and the hills so I’d say that’s where my love of the outdoors stems from.”

Lachlan adds that his other great photographic passion is people.

“People are amazing and you never know what you’re going to get from an individual, be it in a portrait situation or on a film set. A beautiful or unique moment can happen at any time when photographing people.

“I also enjoy the honesty in photographing individuals, taking the time to get



“

By the end of the day, I felt like I knew it back-to-front and it just felt right.

to know them and engaging with them. Everyone has a story, everyone is interesting, and capturing genuine and honest moments in a single frame is what really excites me.”

The Right Gear

With a lot of his photography done on location, using available lighting and often with a need to work quickly, Lachlan is acutely aware of the need to have the right camera equipment.

“Having the right gear for the job means I have a much better chance of capturing the best possible image under the given circumstances.”

Like a great many professional photographers, he was locked into using a D-SLR system so he was pleasantly surprised when he first encountered Olympus’s OM-D cameras and quickly found that the Micro Four Thirds mirrorless design suited his requirements on many levels.

“I’m a relatively new user of the Olympus system. I first used an Olympus camera at an Olympus function held at my studio where they were showcasing the OM-D E-M1. It was a revelation! I’d never used a Micro Four Thirds camera before so it was extremely exciting.

“By the end of the day, I felt like I knew it back-to-front and it just felt right. I could also see there would be huge advantages



in having one or two – now three actually – in my kit. It’s a different look and feel to a full frame D-SLR and, to be honest, the look really suited my style. I enjoy a cinematic look to my images so the M43 aesthetic works for me. It looks far less threatening than a big D-SLR. I find I can be much more stealthy when using the Olympus so I’m now capturing moments that I would have previously missed. And the low light image quality is superb.”

Part of the OM-D system’s low light capabilities comes from the availability of fast lenses in the M.Zuiko Digital line-up.

“My favourite lens at the moment is the 75mm f1.8,” says Lachlan Moore. “It’s just so sharp, but it’s not a harsh sharpness. Its quality is incredible. Also the 40-150mm and 7-14mm zoom are currently in high rotation. Of late too, the 45mm f1.8 has also had a good run. I’ve been shooting under constant lighting so I’ve loved the fast lenses coupled with the in-camera image



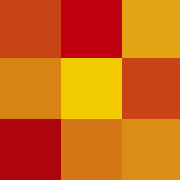
stabilisation. Getting pin-sharp images even shooting hand-held at a 1/30 second means I can reduce the ISO for maximum image quality in these situations.”

Lachlan is also using his OM-D cameras – specifically the E-M5 Mark II – for shooting video.

“Again the excellent image stabilisation and the ability to shoot hand-held are great drawcards as well as being able to run really light. The E-M5’s allow me to capture so much more content, as well as see what I was shooting via the EVF. I can even view in 16:9 and manage my white balances much easier. The advantage of being able to see the image mods live on screen, such as exposure comp and white balance is fantastic! The touch screen focusing was also a huge plus with focus points edge-to-edge.

“The use of Micro Four Third cameras on a film set is relatively new and the Olympuses caused quite a stir! But in a good way.”





To Be Sure

EPSON SURECOLOR SC-P600

Epson is in the process of revamping its photo printer range under the new SureColor branding with new styling and a range of small, but nonetheless important revisions.

REPORT BY TREVERN DAWES



While new digital cameras tend to arrive at a rapid rate, it can be several years between an A3+ printer and its updated model. After four years, the Epson SureColor SC-P600 is the successor to the venerable Stylus Pro R3000.

The new SC-P600 (the "P", by the way, stands for "Photo") is essentially the same as the out-going R3000, but

comes in a revised casing and has a new inkset, extended connections to remote devices and a 6.8 cm LCD tilt-adjustable touch screen to control most functions. The SureColor range is progressively replacing the Stylus Pro line-up, with the A2+ format SC-P800 – under testing here right now – announced most recently.

We might concede that inkjet printers have reached a plateau of image

realism where little else can be achieved apart from the usual user wish list of cheaper prices for both printer and inks combined with faster speed and larger capacity cartridges. However, any improvements are undoubtedly welcome.

The new UltraChrome HD pigment inkset (coded as a T7601 to T7609) comprises five colours (Cyan, Light Cyan, Yellow, Vivid Magenta and Vivid Light Magenta) and four blacks (Photo Black, Matte Black, Light Black and Light Black). The Photo Black and Matte Black share a channel and automatically interchange according to whatever media is selected to have eight inks running.

The D-Max of 2.84 is claimed by Epson to be the darkest for any pigment printer. In association with the new colourants, new resin encapsulation and high resolution, the print quality with pigments reaches to a new peak. For extra measure, the longevity ratings are expected to significantly increase, but we'll need to await confirmation from Wilhelm Research.

The connections with Apple AirPrint and Google Cloud Print plus WiFi Direct (for smartphones, tablets and PCs) will appeal to the technically minded, but is likely to have little bearing when it comes down to making exhibition quality display prints.

Description

The sleek, black SureColor SC-P600 has a sturdy construction and is as elegant as a desktop printer can be. Weighing 15 kilograms, it's easy enough to position on a sturdy desk and comfortable enough to carry over short distances. The top area is ideal for temporary placement of papers.

The LCD touch screen swivels out to 45 degrees. The top left button is a blank while the other three are for power on/off, back to previous menu, and home. The LCD menu attends to most functions, including media selection, WiFi connection, CD/DVD label printing, black ink selection and a low ink warning. Via 'Administration' and 'Print Status Sheet' there is even a usage history to report on the date of first usage, the number of prints and the A4 equivalent prints.

The default for sleep mode is three minutes. If no operation occurs during that period the printer goes to sleep but

is awakened by any new action. The duration can be altered from one to 240 seconds via the LCD menu. Power supply may be set to 'Off' to leave the printer on continually or to a designated time.

Three paper feed systems are available, along with a CD/DVD tray. The auto sheet feeder attends to most printing operations, the front loader is designed for fine-art media up to 1.3 millimetres in thickness and heavyweight media, while a roll feeder can be attached at the rear.

General operation is relatively quiet apart from an occasional whir as the printer sorts out its routines. From time to time the printer will stop to have a 'big think', sometimes for a minute or so, to check everything and will then carry on.

Paper Handling

The auto sheet mechanism takes hold of the paper, pushes it up and down to set the alignment and then proceeds. Accurate placement of paper in the auto sheet feeder as single sheets (or as stacked, fanned paper) is important, otherwise the printer may not pick up the paper or will take it straight through, add a dent and announce the failure with some beeps and a 'Reload' message.

The review printer proved to be inconsistent with the auto paper feeder, one day working perfectly and the next day causing frustration. Hopefully, this was just a glitch in this particular printer and not a common problem.

The front feed for fine-art and heavyweight papers requires a tray to be lowered and the rear output support platform opened. Paper is positioned and 'Load' pressed on the touch screen. The paper is drawn through to the rear outlet and, after a short wait, the printer

instructs the tray to be returned to its normal position. The print file is then sent. Unlike some other printers, there are no margin restrictions applied.

The paper roll facility is essential for long banners, but for a metre long panorama the auto paper feeder is fine. Epson has ten-metre rolls of glossy (255 gsm) and semi-gloss (251 gsm) paper. Needless to say, it's important to ensure adequate ink supply and preferably run a small test piece before committing. There is no auto paper cutter, but a faint line is printed to enable scissors to be used.

The roll paper facility allows banner prints up to 15 metres long. The 'User Defined' setting allows widths from 89 to 329 millimetres and lengths from 89 to 15,000 millimetres. Curiously, the user manual indicates a maximum roll length of 3276.7 millimetres, but only 1117.6 millimetres for Mac users.

Main Panel

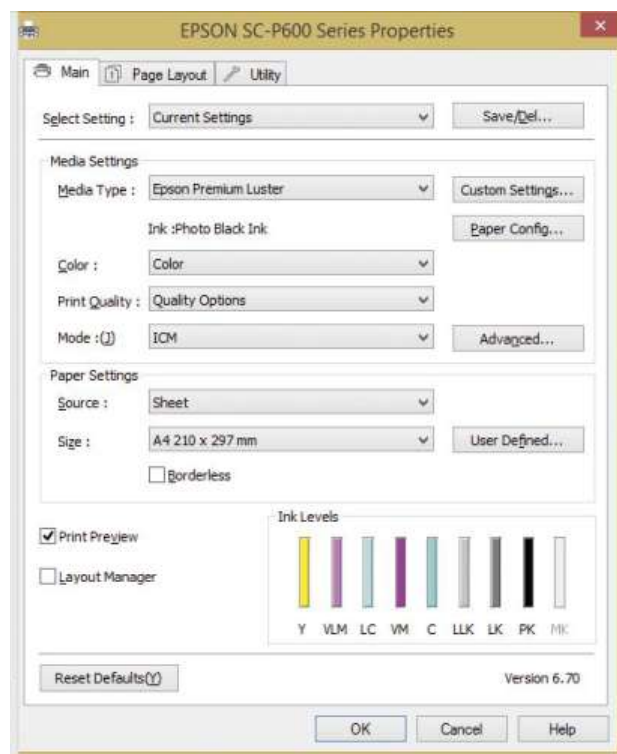
The 'Main' panel is the hub for printing. The 'Media Type' has a listing for five categories with further options. These are 'Photo Paper' (4), 'Matte Paper' (2), 'Fine Art Paper' (3), 'Plain Paper' (1) and 'CD/DVD' (2).

The range of 'Print Quality' is determined by the media type. This list covers 'Speed', 'Quality', 'Max. Quality' and 'Quality Options'. The latter cover resolution and the choice of having 'High Speed' printing set to either 'Off' or 'On'.

The modes of colour management include 'Epson Standard (sRGB)', 'Adobe RGB', 'PhotoEnhance', 'ICM' and 'Off – No Colour Management'. The first two basic settings simply lock into the colour space of the image while 'ICM' follows through to ICC profiles. Although each approach produced satisfactory results, most Photoshop enthusiasts can opt for 'Printer Manages Colours' and lock in ICM values, or 'Let Photoshop Manages Colours' with the 'Mode' set to 'Off – No Colour Adjustment'.

The 'Size' menu lists standard paper sizes and includes a 'User Defined' setting where a custom size can be established and saved. A right-click over any feature will bring up 'Help' and further details.

On the Epson Website there is an excellent RGB guide to colour printing compiled by Australia's Training and



The 'Main' panel is where all the parameters are established. Regular settings can be saved for quick retrieval.

The angled control panel/screen provides useful information and access to the printer's features.



The Epson Print CD program allows CD/DVD labels and jackets to be produced.



The nine-pigment ink cartridges. Each cartridge contains 25.9 millilitres of ink.



The SC-P600 is at its very best on matte or fine-art papers. No surface problems, rich blacks to create a foundation for excellent colour, and shadow details retained.



Application Specialist. Simply search on "RGB Print Guide – Epson Australia".

Gloss And Semi-Gloss

Test prints made on gloss and semi-gloss media had impact and vibrance approaching that of the dye-based printers, but also exhibited gloss differential (i.e. seeing the gloss surface of the paper where no ink resides). This has always been a problem with pigmented inks used on gloss or semi-gloss media. The only remedy is to use printers with a gloss optimiser cartridge, such as the Epson Stylus Pro 2000. The only disadvantage here is a slight dulling down of the surface. Prints made on papers like Epson Traditional Photo or Innova Fibraprint Gloss were substantial in weight and image quality.

Epson does offer a useful piece of advice for reducing the gloss differential on black and white prints. In the 'Main' panel and with 'Advanced B&W' selected, proceed to 'Advanced' and change the 'Off' default for 'Highlight Optical Shift' to 'On'. This adds extra Light Light Black dots to the clear areas.

Matte Prints

If the SC-P600 does a creditable job with gloss and semi-gloss media, it's at its very best with matte and fine-art papers. The depth of the black helps to anchor the colours.

The first test print was an A4 size B&W made on the Epson Fine Art Velvet paper. As a fine-art paper, this required the use of the front feeder. Maximum resolution was set for the B&W print and it took nine minutes and 45 seconds, but the result brought a 'wow' response. The front loader is super fussy about accurate paper alignment so if a repeated 'Askew' message appears, use the LCD screen to proceed to 'Paper Setting' and turn 'Paper Skew Check' to 'Off'.

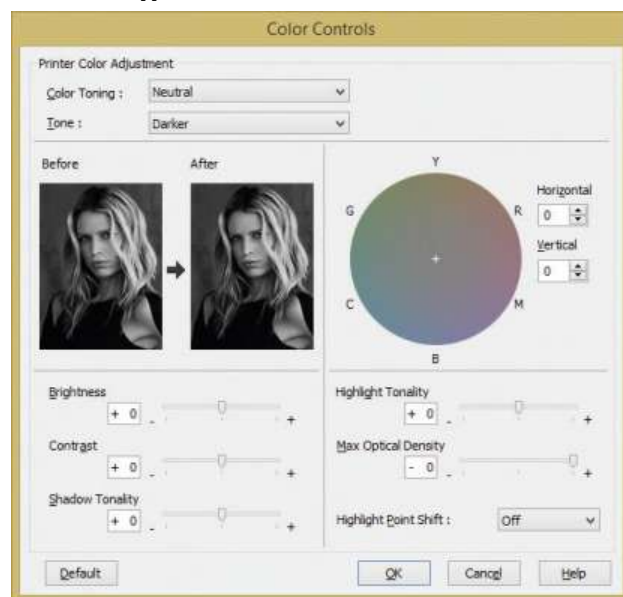
An A4 colour print – made with the 'Quality' setting – took 2:15 minutes. Epson's Hot Press Bright has been a favourite media and for the A4 test print there was no hesitation in using the utmost resolution. There's no point in settling for compromises when using a top printer and top paper combination. It took another 9:45 minutes, but produced another outstanding result.

Several prints were produced on A3 size Innova Fibraprint 280 gsm matte

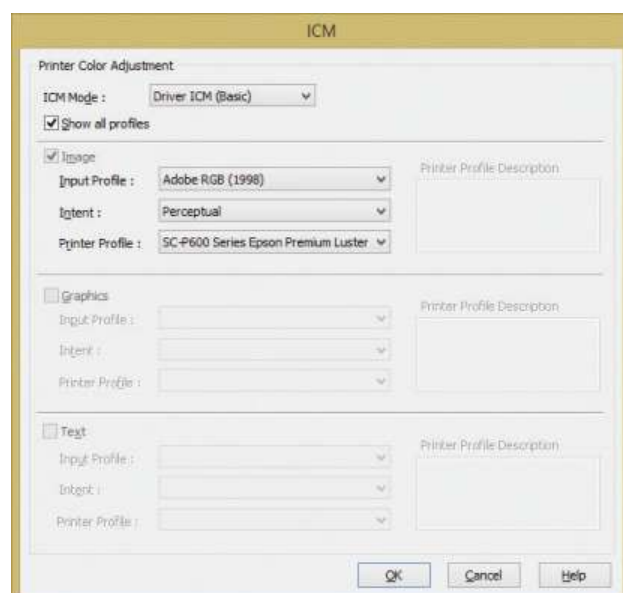
Manual adjustments can be made in the 'Colour Controls' panel.



For black and white printing there are a number of variations that can be applied.



In the 'ICM' panel data for 'Input Profile', 'Intent' and 'Printer Profile' are selected.



paper with 300x200 mm images. The profile for Epson UltraSmooth Fine Art Paper was initially adopted. At 'Quality', each print took 2:15 minutes via the front paper feed. The results were a touch yellow, but by using Adobe RGB mode (to match the print files) and taking out -5 Yellow, the colour was then spot on. This proved to be a most satisfactory arrangement without the need to chase down or create a custom ICC profile. A portfolio of prints on A3 could be comfortably produced at about six per hour via the front feed.

The ability to handle other (i.e. non-Epson) media was demonstrated with two A3+ sheets of Lumijet Radiant White 290 gsm (Hahnemühle) fine-art ink jet paper. At 'Quality, level 4' and with the profile for 'Watercolor Paper – Radiant White', it took four minutes with 'High Speed' switched on and nine minutes with 'High Speed' off. The results were most pleasing.

A custom ICC profile might extract a few more points, but getting a good result from a canned profile is most encouraging. The general recommendation is to work with 'High Speed' switched off to ensure better detail and shadow density. Doubling the print time is not an issue when the aim is quality and the print size is A3+.

Ascertaining the differences in print quality between the SC-P600 and Stylus Pro R3000 (or, indeed, any of Canon's pigmented ink printers) using similar images, papers and appropriate ICC profiles without scientific apparatus can be difficult. For those who dwell on the finest of technicalities the Internet can provide precise data for D-Max, gamut, etc. comparisons. The rest of us tend to judge everything by eye.

B&W Printing

Black and white print enthusiasts are fully catered for, with the scope for either neutral results or warm, cool or sepia tonings via the Epson Advanced Black and White (ABW) control carried forward from the Stylus R3000. Apart from the gloss or matte black inks, the Light Black and Light Light Black combine to provide extensive tonality.

Devotees of monochrome will undoubtedly experiment to find the optimum settings for favourite papers and may find that assigning RGB mode

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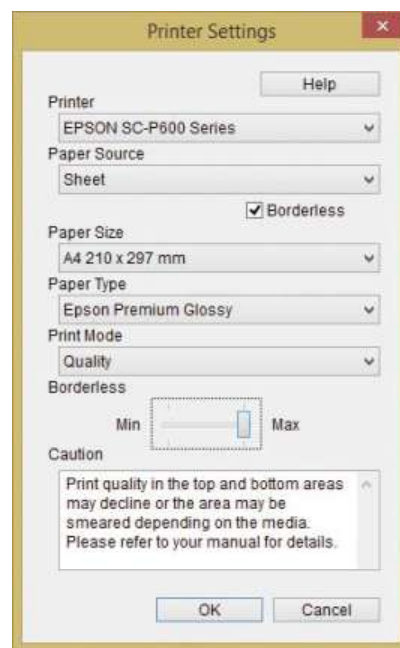
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■ The 'Print Preview' is an invaluable feature that should be used all the time.

■ All ink levels can be monitored, along with print progress and the print queue.



■ The 'Printer Settings' panel for printing via Epson Easy Photo Print.

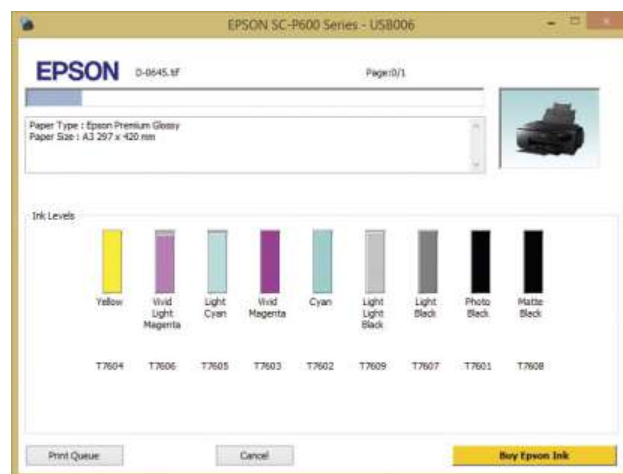
to print files will deliver better outcomes than printing the same file converted to greyscale.

Photo Black and Matte share the same line and interchange automatically. When Photo Black is swapped to Matte Black it takes 1.5 minutes and uses one millilitre of ink, while going from Matte Black to Photo Black takes 3.5 minutes and consumes 3.0 millilitres. However, the 'Normal' default change-over mode can be altered, via the LCD screen, to 'Save' mode for one millilitres spillage each way. The path is 'System Administration', 'Printer Settings' and 'Black Ink Change Settings'.

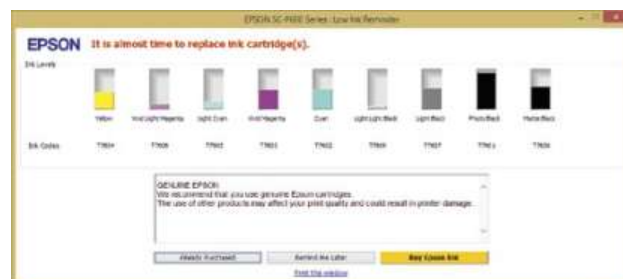
Although there is a small saving in ink, Epson has taken a cautious approach whereby 'Normal' ensures a clean changeover. 'Save' can involve some risk of contamination. Epson at least provides the option. The 'Save Ink' setting is not mentioned in the manual. As regular changeover of black inks will result in wastage of costly ink, printing sessions need to be well organised.

Panoramic Prints

Paper rolls are the ideal way to produce banners or panoramic prints. However, the auto sheet feeder can still be used for long prints provided the paper is properly supported and the leading edge cut square for correct alignment (pull out the rear paper support only



■ The first warning for low ink provides ample scope for several more prints and time to organise replacement cartridges.



Black and white enthusiasts are fully catered for, with the scope for either neutral results or warm, cool or sepia tonings via the Epson Advanced Black and White (ABW) control.

one extension for a wider support). A 1000x30 millimetres image made on a 1200x329 millimetres custom paper size didn't present any difficulties.

The paper was cut from a 610 millimetres wide roll of Schreoller 230 gsm matte and the Epson Archival Matte profile adopted. Maximum resolution and 'High Speed' switched off (no comprises for a big print) may have led to a whopping 36 minutes of printing time, but the result was well worth the wait. Watching the print slowly emerge brought back memories of black and white prints appearing in a darkroom developer tray.

The remainder cut-off piece from the roll – which measured 281x1200 millimetres – was printed by the front feed. This is the better option for ensuring accurate loading on those panoramic prints when paper from the roll holder is not available.

Borderless printing is only available at set sizes of A4, A3, A3+, 100x148 millimetres, 9x13 centimetres, 10x15 centimetres, 13x18 centimetres and 20x25 centimetres. The front feed does not support borderless printing.

While an A3 borderless print at the 'Speed' resolution was produced in just three minutes, it took 16:45 minutes at the 'Maximum Quality' setting (i.e. level 5 and with 'High Speed' off). The difference between these two extremes was not immediately noticeable and requires



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a magnifier to appreciate the variation. The colour in both prints was identical, but the 'Speed' setting did create some banding in a clear blue sky.

Ink Usage

An accurate assessment of the number of prints per ink set and cost per print would require keeping records of the area of prints created over many ink sets. Our calculations were based on one-and-a-half inksets, weighing full, empty and partially-used cartridges to find the total ink consumed and adding up the total area of printing.

Most printing was carried out at the 'Quality' setting. This resulted in a rough ink cost of about \$6.30 for an A3 size print and \$3.15 for an A4 print. These are based on a cartridge priced at \$47.99 (\$1.85/millilitre). When the first low ink warning occurs there still remains plenty

of ink to continuing printing. When the second reminder appears another four or five A4 prints are possible before the "Replace Cartridge" message appears. The cartridge to be replaced is noted on the printer's screen and the computer monitor. Considering the high cost of ink, there is no point in changing ink until the final drop has been consumed.

The Verdict

Despite a moderate outlay for this printer, relatively expensive inks and a black ink changeover system that still needs attention, the SureColor SC-P600 certainly knows how to turn out a top quality print. The 25.9 millilitres ink cartridges do mean longer usage before changeover, but this still doesn't negate the relatively high cost of the ink.

The SC-P600 is at its very best on matte or fine-art papers. No surface problems, rich blacks to create a foundation for excellent colour, shadow details retained and very simple approaches to matching up everything to images on screen. Longer printing times are not an inconvenience when quality is the principal objective.

This printer should not be regarded as a general purpose 'odd job' model, but a 'state-of-the-art' machine for the very best work at moderate volumes. The CD/DVD label printing capacity, roll paper holder and remote printing capacity are nice features, but not likely to weigh

heavily against the prime purpose of sheer quality printing.

The SC-P600 is the first of the "SureColor" branded printers from Epson and it's a great start... plus a good cause to be looking forward to the other models coming in the series. **QP**

SPECS

EPSON SURECOLOR SC-P600 \$1499

Printer Type: A3+ format (13 inches wide) for photo-quality prints via a nine-colour pigmented inkset (but eight cartridges in use at any one time with auto switching between matte black and photo black).

Maximum Resolution: 5760x1440 dpi.

Ink Cartridges: Individual per colour, 25.9 millilitre capacity. Epson UltraChrome HD pigments. Colours are photo black, matte black, cyan, light cyan, vivid magenta, vivid light magenta, yellow, light black and light light black. Smallest droplet size is 2.0 picolitres via 'Variable Droplet Technology'.

Paper Sizes: Borderless printing on cut sheets from 149x100 mm up to A3+. Paper rolls up to 329 mm in width can be fitted. Customisable print sizes.

Interfaces: Hi-Speed USB 2.0, 100 Base-T Ethernet, WiFi. Epson iPrint Mobile App., Apple Airprint and Google Cloud Print.

Acoustic Noise: 48.2 dB (A).

Main Features: 6.85 cm LCD display panel with touch controls, Micro Piezo on-demand print head with 180 nozzles per colour, variable droplet sizing, five print quality/speed settings, Advanced B&W mode, auto matte/photo black ink switching (according to media type), head alignment and maintenance sensors.

Dimensions (WxHxD): 616x369x228 mm (closed).

Weight: 15.0 kilograms (without ink cartridges or media).

Price: \$1499 (inc. GST). Ink cartridges are \$47.99 each.

Distributor: Epson Australia, telephone 1300 131 928 or visit www.epson.com.au



This printer should not be regarded as a general purpose 'odd job' model, but a 'state-of-the-art' machine for the very best work at moderate volumes.



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How To Create An Online Portfolio

Displaying your creative talents online is now an essential part of marketing a photography business. Rosemary Ann Ogilvie provides some advice about how to do this most effectively and efficiently.



To attract new clients, it's essential to have an online portfolio of your work. To sell yourself to prospective clients, your portfolio must be strong. So the first rule in creating your gallery is to be ruthless when selecting the photographs – choose only the most superb examples of your work.

If you have multiple specialties, separate your work into sub galleries to ensure each is properly highlighted. Limit each gallery to a maximum of 12 images as this is far more powerful than having 20 or 30 pieces that are just OK. Unless your gallery is telling a story – such as a wedding from beginning to end – position the strongest of these strong images at the beginning and one or two at the end, as these are the points where they hit the viewer hardest.

As you select the images for display, keep your ideal client – or clients for those with multiple specialties – in front of mind to ensure those you choose are targeted to them and address their needs.

Background Colour

In many instances, images work best when showcased against a black or grey background as this provides greater contrast and also helps bring out the colours of the photographs, making the images appear more vivid. However, black may not work as well with any form of outdoor photography

or with portraiture, so experiment to see whether your images look better against a white background.

If you do use black, be sure to leaven it with a splash of colour – your logo may be sufficient, or you might use it on the navigation buttons. On this subject, ensure your site navigation is as easy and natural to use as possible. Navigation is not the area to take your creativity to the limit. Keep it simple so the viewer's attention remains on the pictures.

Be careful about using coloured text against a black background as it can be very difficult to read if the contrast is poor – and screen resolutions vary hugely. Remember, people don't have the patience to persevere with a difficult site.

Image Protection

High-resolution images really showcase your work, but there are some downsides to using them. They're more tempting to 'lift' and the site will take longer to load, which may test the viewer's perseverance. For this reason, avoid Flash introductions as they further slow the loading process. Moreover, Flash is not search-engine friendly and can't be used on certain devices. An alternative option is to post low-res versions or thumbnails, but provide links to high-res versions.

Unless you're happy for your photographs to be shared across the Web, you'll need to add some protection. The first and most important thing is to make clear on

“ High-resolution images really showcase your work, but there are some downsides to using them. They're more tempting to 'lift' and the site will take longer to load, which may test the viewer's perseverance.

your portfolio site – or any website where your pictures appear – that your images are copyright and that some, or all, rights to their use are reserved. Failing to state that you are reserving rights may lead people to believe they have open slather to do whatever they wish with them.

Another option is to embed watermarks onto each photo so if they are stolen, the watermark is always there – and the bigger the watermark, the more difficult it is to remove. But the downside is this does impact the quality of the images. You may even consider using copyright information – such as 'Copyright 2015 All Rights Reserved' – as the watermark. So, if the images do make their way elsewhere, the copyright notice sticks.

Another protection mechanism is to disable the right-click using JavaScript (http://rainbow.arch.scriptmania.com/scripts/no_right_click.html) which prevents right-click action anywhere on the page.



Portfolio Service

While you may choose to create your own custom portfolio site if you have the time and expertise, using one of the numerous portfolio builder sites – some of which are free – removes the guesswork and enables you to quickly set up a professional gallery.

Look for an option that is easy to use, easy to update, gives you control of your SEO, and offers a wide choice of flexible, customisable templates to ensure your gallery is a true representation of your style and brand. Additionally, consider a site that includes unlimited photo proofing so you're not paying a hefty charge for each upload: this is particularly important if you have a number of specialties.

The platform must be easy for viewers to use and navigate on all devices. A portfolio service with responsive design ensures your site is perfectly formatted to the specific device they're using. Additionally, if you're considering giving clients the option of purchasing images directly from the site, look at services with an in-built e-commerce function.

The site should also have the ability to connect with all your social media pages so visitors can quickly share your images – if you are happy to do this to gain more visibility. Another key option is a function that helps you manage your client email list.

Recent reviews on these sites can be found at www.sitebuilderreport.com/website-builder/portfolio and www.makeuseof.com/tag/best-website-builders-create-clean-online-portfolio/

Before making your final decision, read as many reviews as you can find and be sure to check out portfolios posted on your short list. Provided you're not in direct competition, you may even consider contacting some of the photographers to see whether the service is fulfilling their needs.



However, those with the knowledge can easily go to the navigation menu and select 'View Source' to find the image path.

Some photographers tile their images, cropping them into four or more 'tiles' and putting them back together. The displayed image still appears to be a single photo, but if someone tries to drag-and-drop or right-click it, they get just a small part. It's effective, but time-consuming if you have numerous images to load.

Or you can post a transparent image and use CSS to put your photo in the background (info about this included in the previous link). If someone right-clicks or tries to drag-and-drop the image, they'll get only the transparent graphic in the foreground. However, once again it's easy to view the source of the page to find the image path.

Essential Extras

Before a Web designer makes even the first mouse click to set up a live Website, they typically create a 'wireframe' which is an initial rough sketch of the layout of each page to share with the client and others involved in creating the site. This is sound practice that applies equally to building an online gallery as it helps ensure you remain focused on your objectives. It can also highlight where you may need to make changes to improve aspects such as the layout, the number of photos in a row or the size of the photographs.

An 'About Us' page is essential as, while your work tells your prospective clients a great deal about you, they still want to know something about the creative talent behind the camera. Detail your relevant education, background, experience and aesthetic, a list of publications and clients, along with one-line extracts from a couple of glowing testimonials.

Include links to some of your online work used in Websites or blogs, as this enables potential clients to view examples of your work in context.

Ideally, display your contact details on every page to make it easy for potential clients to contact you. At the very least, create a 'Contact Us' page and include a link on every page. Ensure this link is clear because people quickly lose patience if they have to search for key information.

SEO

Search engine optimisation (SEO) is vital to ensure clients can find you. We've covered this subject in detail in the past, but basically SEO is about matching keywords within your content to the keywords that prospective clients type into search engines. To find out these terms, see Wordtracker (www.wordtracker.com) and the Google Adwords Keyword Tool (<https://adwords.google.com/KeywordPlanner>).

One of the most effective SEO tools is to add 'Alt' and 'Title' tags to every photograph displayed on your gallery – meta tags

that tell Google what the photo is about. This is the text displayed when you hover the pointer over a picture on a Website.

Feedback

Once you've completed your site and fine-tuned it to the greatest extent possible, ask others to review it and provide honest feedback. Family and friends can be involved, but because they may be biased be sure to also ask people outside your immediate circle.

Aim to have your gallery viewed on as many devices as possible – desktops, laptops, netbooks, tablets, hybrids and mobile phones – to ensure it works well on all. And keep in mind that people now are more likely to conduct their purchasing research on a mobile device, so it needs to showcase brilliantly on these devices.

Ideally, show your gallery to an industry professional as well, as they can provide insights into omissions or areas that need to be beefed up, or bugs you may have missed.

Refresh Regularly

Finally, keep the gallery fresh by replacing a few photos every couple of months. Extra work, yes, but essential to keep people returning – so it's important the platform you choose allows for easy updating.

However, there is a caveat: update your portfolio only if the new work is even stronger than the old. Continual improvement defines a good photographer, and your portfolio needs to demonstrate this. **QP**

Rosemary Ann Ogilvie can be contacted via email by writing to roseo@ozemail.com.au



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Working Glass

ZEISS LOXIA LENSES

With the arrival of the 42 megapixels A7R II, Sony's full-35mm mirrorless camera system can no longer be ignored by professional photographers... and Zeiss is ready with a pair of high-performance FE mount primes.

REPORT BY PAUL BURROWS

Zeiss's Loxia lenses are traditional manual focus designs and have a manual aperture collar which have a 'de-click' setting for stepless adjustment when shooting video.



SLOWLY BUT SURELY MIRRORLESS CAMERAS

are moving into the professional end of the market. Olympus's OM-D E-M1 and Panasonic's Lumix GH4 leading the way for the Micro Four Thirds format. Fujifilm's XT-1 and Samsung's NX-1 are flying the flag for 'APS-C' sensors, but perhaps most interestingly, Sony's Alpha 7 Series offers the appeal of a full-35mm size sensor in a more compact form than any rival D-SLR.

Sony has got in here ahead of either Canon or Nikon (which surely have to offer something similar before too long) and, after a short period of limited lens choices, it's now full steam ahead for the full-frame version of Sony's E Mount... better known as the FE mount. Not only has Sony put the pedal to the metal with new FE mount lenses, but Zeiss is weighing in with its own series of models under the 'Loxia' name. Well, in fact, Zeiss is offering two ranges of the lenses for the FE mount, but the recently-released Batis models are contemporarily styled and feature autofocus while the Loxia lenses are unashamedly classical, both inside and out. This means metal barrel tubes, glass elements and engraved, painted-in markings.

There are currently two Loxia models – a 35mm f2.0 Biotar and a 50mm f2.0 employing the truly classi-

continued on page 50



ZEISS LOXIA BIOGON T* 35mm f2.0

THERE IS, OF COURSE, A SONY-badged 35mm f2.8 prime available for the A7 cameras, but it's a very long way off what Zeiss is offering with the Loxia 35mm f2.0, particularly in terms of the build quality. The Sony lens is also distinctly 'new age' so it's an autofocus model, lacks an aperture collar and plastic is the predominant material used in its construction. There's also the new Zeiss-designed 35mm f1.4 Distagon which is obviously faster but is at least twice as bulky and weighs 630 grams.

The Loxia 35mm f2.0 has a nine-element optical design which includes one made from glass with anomalous partial dispersion characteristics, primarily to assist with the minimising of chromatic aberrations. This lens is as



much about its visual characteristics as its technical performance so it's not quite flat field – at least not at apertures larger than f5.6 – and there is some brightness fall-off or vignetting when shooting wide-open. The centre-to-corner focus fall-off from field curvature is most evident when using the closer focusing distances and significantly reduces the closer you get to infinity, but in real world terms, the slight softening towards the corners of the frame is unlikely to be an issue and besides, as just noted, it's

gone by f5.6. In some situations spherical aberration is noticeable in the highlights at f2.0, but it's reduced by stopping down by even just a one-third stop and completely eliminated by f2.8.

The correction for distortion is excellent and likewise for chromatic aberrations which are, subsequently, both negligible. Beautiful contrast adds to the perception of exceptional sharpness, but there's also a creamy smoothness in the tonality which compliments the overall clarity, giving a quite distinctive look. This is partially the look of a premium-quality all-glass optical construction, but it's also about the visual characteristics achieved via a particular combination of resolution, contrast and colour balance.

The precision of the manual focusing collar allows for exceptionally fine control, but this is where the A7's focus assist facilities – particularly the focus peaking display – proved to be extremely helpful. That both the peaking display and a magnified image appear immediately you turn the focusing collar is another benefit of having the electronic lens-to-camera interface. The 35mm's size and weight are also perfectly balanced for the A7 and there's a nice bit of bling where the Zeiss blue sealing gasket meets the orange Sony Alpha lens mount ring!

SPECS ZEISS LOXIA BIOGON T* 35mm f2.0

Mount: Sony E (FE) mount (for full-35mm or 'APS-C' formats).
Angle-of-View: 63.02 degrees (diagonal).
Construction: 9 elements/6 groups. One element made from anomalous partial dispersion glass.
Minimum Focus: 30 cm.
Maximum Reproduction

Ratio: 1:5.8.
Aperture Range: f2.0 – f22.
Overall Length: 66.0 mm.
Maximum Diameter: 62.1 mm.
Filter Diameter: 52 mm.
Weight: 340 grams.
Features: All-metal barrel construction, all-glass optical construction, depth-of-field scale, full multi-coating, ten-bladed

diaphragm, 'De-Click' aperture ring, sealing ring on mount prevents the intrusion of dust or moisture. Metal lens hood supplied.
Price: \$1799.
Distributor: C.R. Kennedy & Company, telephone (03) 9823 1555 or visit www.zeiss.com/photo



ON TRIAL
ZEISS LOXIA LENSES



ZEISS LOXIA PLANAR T* 50mm f2.0

SONY'S OWN CLOSEST PRIME LENS

offering in this category is another Zeiss-designed model, the Sonnar 55mm f1.8 which is actually quite close to the Loxia 50mm in terms of size and weight, and does have a weatherised barrel

construction. Nevertheless, this is again an autofocus lens without a manual focusing collar so it doesn't have quite the same traditionalist appeal.

The Loxia 50mm f2.0 has a six-element optical construction (in four groups) and it's again very highly corrected for both distortion and chromatic aberrations to the extent that neither are ever likely to be an issue. There's slight vignetting evident at f2.0 and f2.8, but it's completely gone by f4.0. The uniformity of sharpness across the frame is again affected by some field curvature at the larger apertures, but the centre sharpness is extremely high and so, consequently, the fall-off towards the corners is all relative. As with the 35mm f2.0 model, stopped down to f5.6 or smaller, the Loxia 50mm delivers wonderful across-the-frame sharpness. The contrast characteristics give real depth and dynamism to the images while the colour rendition is flawless but with a pleasing saturation which creates a natural vividness.

Thanks to a ten-blade diaphragm the out-of-focus effects are nicely smooth, but the transition from sharp to soft is quite abrupt, creating a marked separation between subject and background that gives almost a 3D look. Overall then, and like its 35mm sibling, the Loxia 50mm has a distinctive visual 'personality' that gives images a real richness of character, technically speaking, but also has pleasing aspects which appeal more on an emotional level.

Also like the 35mm, the Zeiss 50mm lens works exceptionally very well on the A7 body, being nicely balanced both physically and visually.



SPECS ZEISS LOXIA BIOGON T* 50mm f2.0

Format: Sony E mount (for full-35mm or 'APS-C' formats).

Angle-of-View: 46.78 degrees (diagonal).

Construction: 6 elements/4 groups.

Minimum Focus: 45 cm.

Maximum Reproduction

Ratio: 1:7.1.

Aperture Range: f2.0 – f22.

Overall Length: 120.0 mm.

Maximum Diameter: 66.2 mm.

Filter Diameter: 52 mm.

Weight: 320 grams.

Features: All-metal barrel construction, all-glass optical construction, depth-of-field scale, full multi-coating, ten-bladed diaphragm, 'De-Click'

aperture ring, sealing ring on mount prevents the intrusion of dust or moisture. Metal lens hood supplied.

Price: \$1249.

Distributor:

C.R. Kennedy & Company, telephone (03) 9823 1555 or visit www.zeiss.com/photo

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cal Planar symmetric optical design. Both are designed for the FE mount, but can also be used on the 'APS-C' format cameras with the attendant 1.5x increase in the effective focal length. However, Zeiss emphasises that these lenses have been "specifically designed" for the Sony Alpha 7 mirrorless cameras which presumably indicates some interface implications. The mounts carry a set of electrical contacts so lens information is recorded in the Exif data and, presumably, the camera's lens correction processing (for vignetting, chromatic aberrations and distortion) is available. It's also worth noting that this interface preserves the five-axis image stabilisation in the newer A7 II and A7R II whereas all other non-Sony lenses default to three-way correction.

Of course, Zeiss is already closely involved with Sony in the designing of the latter's own lenses (for both the A and FE mount), but the Loxia models are entirely 'in house' designs, albeit manufactured in Japan.

They're both comparatively compact designs to compliment the size of the A7 bodies, but neither are light weights

■ All-glass optics are easily a match for the new generation of ultra-high resolution full-35mm sensors.

and have a reassuring 'heft' which suggests the minimal use of plastics. Also evident on the outside is the precision of the engineering with both the focusing collar and aperture ring flush with the main barrel, located with clearly very fine tolerances. As we've come to expect from Zeiss, the focusing collar's movement is silky smooth... so much so that you'll find yourself constantly winding it back and forth just to enjoy the experience. Likewise, the aperture collars have nicely notchy detents – in one-third stop increments – but there's also a 'De-Click'



Zeiss is already closely involved with Sony in the designing of the latter's own lenses, but the Loxia models are entirely 'in house' designs, albeit manufactured in Japan.

feature which switches the movement to continuous. This is done via a small adjustment screw in the back of the lens mount and Zeiss applies a dedicated tool for the job, but should it go astray, a jeweller's micro screwdriver will work just as well. Both lenses are supplied with a bayonet-fit metal hood.

While the precision of the fit will afford some measure of protection against the intrusion of dust or moisture, the Loxia lenses aren't weatherproofed as such, but there is a substantial silicone gasket – in Zeiss blue – on the mounts which shields the most vulnerable area.

We tested the Loxia lenses on the original Sony A7 body which has the 24.7 megapixels sensor, but there's no doubt that the optical resolution of both models will be more than sufficient for the 43.6 megapixels (42 MP effective) of the A7R II.

The Verdict

The Zeiss Loxia lenses are arguably as much about the experience of using them as their first-class imaging performance. The manual focusing and manual aperture ring demand more involvement than the alternatives at these focal lengths, but you also still get the digital-era conveniences of an interface that enables the A7 series MF assists, accesses in-camera corrections and records the lens data (which can be useful in post-production, particularly with RAW files).

There's no question these lenses are a delight to use, but there's also real pleasure to be had from their balance of technical excellence and visual sensuality. The 35mm particularly excels in the latter while the 50mm is superior in terms of the former, being better corrected all round, but we're talking about very high standards here so both lenses deliver command performances.

If you needed another reason to consider Sony's A7 cameras, the Loxia lenses present two very compelling arguments. **GP**



Photograph by Peter Eastway, G.M. Photog.

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